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Response to letter "Do all hypnotic drugs and sedatives have risk for cancer?"

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Letter to the Editor

Response to letter “Do all hypnotic drugs and sedatives have risk for cancer?”*To the Editor:*

Iqbal and colleagues analyzed Asian data on three hypnotic/sedative drugs and overall risk of cancer [1]. They found that nitrazepam had a nonsignificant association (adjusted odds ratio [AOR], 0.98; 95% confidence interval [CI], 0.80–1.21), while flunitrazepam (AOR, 1.16; 95% CI, 1.04–1.30) and lorazepam (AOR, 1.19; 95% CI, 1.02–1.38) had a statistically significant association with cancer. They concluded that nitrazepam may be safer than other hypnotics in terms of carcinogenicity. We used meta-analysis to evaluate whether the relative risk ratios reported by Yu-Chuan indeed differ from each other. The I² statistic was 20.8% ($p=0.283$), suggesting that this was not the case. Given the lack of statistical evidence, we urge caution in interpreting nitrazepam as a safer drug.

Conflict of interest

The ICMJE Uniform Disclosure Form for Potential Conflicts of Interest associated with this article can be viewed by clicking on the following link: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sleep.2015.07.014>.

Reference

- [1] Iqbal U, Jian WS, Huang CW, et al. Do all hypnotic and sedatives have risk for cancer? *Sleep Med* 2015;20:170.

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